

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. This action is responsive to the following communication: Final Rejection mailed 03/25/2009.

2. An extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) is required in order to make an examiner's amendment which places this application in condition for allowance. During a telephone conversation conducted on 06/19/2009, Matthew J. Ricciardi requested an extension of time for ONE MONTH(S) and authorized the Director to charge Deposit Account No. 04-1073 the required fee of \$65.00 for this extension and authorized the following examiner's amendment. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

3. The application has been amended as follows: Attached to this Office Action is a PDF file sent on 06/19/2009 from Matthew J. Ricciardi that has amendments to claims 7, 13, 20, 22 and 33-34 along with the remaining previously presented claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 7, 10, 12-20, 22 and 24-34 are allowed.

5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Independent claims 7, 13 and 20 when considered as a whole, are allowable over the prior art of record. Specifically, the prior art of Moezzi teaches the limitation:

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“method for virtually navigating an environment in three dimensions; wherein the system creates virtual synthesized images for navigation in the immersive scene”. But the claims recite a different combination of limitation: “virtually navigating an actual environment, the method comprising: defining short virtual paths in the environment, each short virtual path comprising a beginning junction, an ending junction, and a plurality a viewpoints along the short virtual path between the beginning and ending junctions”, this limitation which features the construction of virtual paths that is not suggested or shown by Moezzi.

The prior art of Sorokin teaches another combination, “having a physical path of a plurality of cameras placed in sequential order for navigation in an actual environment”, but does not suggest the limitation.

Further Moezzi and Sorokin teach the limitation: “capturing real-time images of the environment from a plurality of actual cameras”, but the claims recite a different combination of limitation “capturing real-time images of the environment from a plurality of actual cameras located in fixed positions near the junctions”, that is not suggested or shown by Moezzi or Sorokin.

Further Moezzi and Sorokin teach the limitation: “generating a plurality of synthetic images corresponding to viewpoints”, but the claims recite a different combination of limitation “generating a plurality of synthetic images corresponding to viewpoints along the short virtual paths”, that is not suggested or shown by Moezzi or Sorokin.

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The dependent claims further add limitations to the allowable subject matter of the corresponding independent claims; thus are also allowable. Therefore the claims are allowed over the art because the claims differ in scope that is not seen or suggested by the prior art.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Inquires

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nicholas Augustine whose telephone number is 571-270-1056 and fax is 571-270-2056. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday: 9:30am- 5:00pm Eastern.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Weilun Lo can be reached on 571-272-4847. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Steven B Theriault/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2179

/Nicholas Augustine/
Examiner
Art Unit 2179
June 28, 2009